

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 11585 241300Z
ACTION EUR-12

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DEPT PASS DOT FOR RAMUNDO

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRN, TGEN, UR, US
SUBJECT: US-USSR TRANSPORTATION AGREEMENT: RENEWAL (05.00)

REF: (A) MOSCOW 11162, (B) STATE 118720

1. SUMMARY - AT MAY 23 MEETING WITH SCICOUNS AND US EXECUTIVE SECRETARY RAMUNDO, AYKAZYAN STATED THAT SCST AND MFA HAVE "SERIOUS" RESERVATIONS ABOUT PROPOSED TWO YEAR RENEWAL TERM, AND ASKED FOR AN OFFICIAL EXPLANATION. AYKAZYAN ALSO INDICATED INFORMALLY THAT THEY HAVE NO PROBLEMS WITH OTHER US PROPOSALS. END SUMMARY.

2. SCICOUNS AND US TRANSPORTATION AGREEMENT EXECUTIVE SECRETARY MET MAY 23 WITH AYKAZYAN, SCST, TO CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING RENEWAL OF TRANSPORTATION BILATERAL. METAL'NIKOV, ISHCHENKO AND INASHVILI, ALSO PARTICIPATED. AYKAZYAN ADVISED THAT SCST AND MFA HAD REVIEWED US DRAFT AMENDED TEXT OF SUBJECT AGREEMENT SUBMITTED MAY 17 (REF A) BUT FAILED TO UNDERSTAND BASIS FOR US PROPOSAL TO RENEW FOR ONLY TWO YEARS. HENCE, MFA AND SCST REQUESTED THE US TO PROVIDE ASAP AN OFFICIAL
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 11585 241300Z

EXPALANTION OF THIS PROPOSAL BEFORE PROCEEDING TO DISCUSSION OF OTHER PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE TEXT OF THE AGREEMENT. AYKAZYAN STRESSED SEVERAL TIMES THAT MFA AND SCST HAD "SERIOUS" RESERVATIONS ABOUT RENEWING FOR ONLY TWO YEARS.

3. BOTH SCICOUNS AND RAMUNDO REITERATED POINTS MADE

AT LAST MEETING THAT TWO YEAR RENEWAL REFLECTS PROBLEMS
RELATIVE TO BALANCE OF ACCESS AND BENEFITS IN TRANSPORT
AGREEMENT. RAMUNDO ALSO NOTED THAT HISTORY OF MARINE
TRANSPORT COOPERATION, FOR EXAMPLE, HAS WEAKENED SCST
CREDIBILITY IN THE EYES OF DOT. THE TWO YEAR RENEWAL
WOULD PUT BOTH SIDES ON NOTICE THAT FURTHER EFFORT IS
REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE A FULLY BALANCED AND MUTUALLY
BENEFICIAL PROGRAM. SCICOUNS AGREED TO TRANSMIT SOVIET
REQUEST FOR "OFFICIAL" EXPLANATION OF TWO YEAR RENEWAL
PROPOSAL TO WASHINGTON. PLEASE ADVISE.

4. WITH RESPECT TO PROPOSED US AMENDMENTS TO AGREEMENT
TEXT, AYKAZYAN EXPRESSED AGAIN (REF A) HIS OPINION THAT
SOVIETS WOULD HAVE LITTLE PROBLEM IN ACCEPTING THEM, BUT
BOTH SCST AND THE MFA WOULD HAVE TO STUDY THEM IN DETAIL
BEFORE RESPONDING OFFICIALLY.

5. COMMENT - WHILE THE SOVIETS ARE CLEARLY UNHAPPY WITH
TWO YEAR RENEWAL, THEY EVIDENTLY DO NOT WISH TO RIS
CANCELLATION OF THE AGREEMENT BY PRESSING THE US TOO HARD
FOR A FULL FIVE YEAR RENEWAL, HENCE AYKAZYAN'S
TIMID REQUEST ONLY FOR AN "EXPLANATION", RATHER THAN A
REJECTION OF A TWO YEAR RENEWAL. IN THIS REGARD,
AYKAZYAN STRESSED THAT "HIGHER AUTHORITIES", I.E., MFA,
WERE ESPECIALLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE MOTIVES BEHIND US
DECISION TO RENEW FOR ONLY TWO YEARS. WE RECOMMEND THAT
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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 11585 241300Z

THE US HOLD FIRM TO ITS ORIGINAL PROPOSAL .END COMMENT.
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